832 *Mpasi* is a love potion. Men are often anxious that women should ask them for love (*ku-pasa*). A man seeing a woman whom he fancies, takes up some of the dust where she has trodden and mixing this with medicine puts it in his hair. If he meet her again, though he takes no notice of her, she will come to him.

789 241 826 When crops are harvested, a layer of the cereal is laid at the bottom of the corn-store, and *unde*, which consists of medicines contained in the skull of or made from the body of a still-born infant, is then put in and the store filled. In this way, he who has only a small garden may be sure that his grain will last a long time. Similar medicine is put in gardens with the first rains to insure heavy crops. A man on the approach of the planting season should never give away seed to anyone until his own seed is put in or it may bring bad luck to his crop. This is evidently a superstition arising from the fact that if he gives seed away, he may not have enough left to raise a crop sufficient to support his family. Some people are considered "lucky at planting pumpkins, other people when they plant, reap only watery pumpkins." A man, therefore, will often ask one of the lucky people to plant his pumpkins for him. My hospital boy always got the cook to plant his pumpkins.

789 824 A man wishing to become a person of importance, with a village of his own, takes a medicine made from a certain tree and then builds his hut in a new place, hoping people will flock to him. The tree is known as *chukambili*. Another medicine, taken in the belief that people will flock to a man in consequence, is made from the bush called *mtola*. Cf. *litula* planted at the threshold to attract visitors.

789 791 Conjuring. There are other performances akin to magic in the eyes of the natives, which I have never had the opportunity of witnessing but which would appear to be of the nature of juggling or possibly hypnotism; some resemble the tricks of jugglers; others are more like some of the performances in India. I naturally supposed that they had been learned from men at the coast (Zanzibar), but I am assured that they belong to the Yao themselves.

Kambenje, a Yao of Chiradzulu, well-known at dances and *Unyago*, after some preliminary dancing, stands still and is covered by a cloth; when the cloth is again removed, he is discovered with a number of squealing puppies held in his loin cloth, which he then hands round. He begins to dance again and the persons to whom the puppies have been given watch him and then find they are holding excrement, not puppies. Or mud-fish are handed round and the people find they are holding women's diapers.

Another trick often performed by Kambenje was the burial of a man in the ground, covered up completely with earth; at the sounding of the drums the buried man comes running in from the back of the watching crowd.

Kasonga, a Yao of Malemya's, priest, and medicine man, after an *Unyago* ceremony used to put on his red blanket and walk over the hot embers of an enormous fire in the village open space. He admitted that he smeared himself with medicine and an eyewitness told me that when he put his feet on the hot logs, it caused a sizzling sound.

771 784 6. It is believed that signs of guilt are visible in the eye of a murderer; medicine is procured in the hope of getting rid of these signs.

7. The possession of the hair of another person is supposed to give the possessor power over that person, hence a medicine man, when the patient he has been treating is cured, shaves the patient and keeps the hair until payment is made.

● [826] 8. A native with light greenish-grey eyes is not to be trusted. He is said to have eyes like a cat and is called *majesijesi;* these eyes are rare among natives.

9. It is unlucky for a child to get into a basket; he may be burned.

10. Should a woman turn the porridge pot upside down, every one who has eaten will become constipated. For the same reason, a woman, after turning out the porridge from the pot, just touches the top of the mass of porridge with the bottom of the pot.

11. A woman will never leave the pounding stick in the grain-mortar. Should she do so, the heavens would fall.

12. When a zebra is killed, a knot is tied in its tail so that eating of the meat shall not cause indigestion.

13. It is unlucky to sit upon a headrest, the *mamilo.* The person would surely be bitten by a snake.

[843] 14. If a man commits murder, and his wife is pregnant at the time, she must sleep on the spear used.

15. Children are told that they must not eat at night; that if they are hungry, they must lie quiet and try to go to sleep again. If they don't obey and sit up eating porridge, a long hairy arm will come through the fastened door and beg for some, the voice of the unseen saying: [539]

> "*Nyse chimkuti'choni nanya ni mjasa!*"
> "Give me that which you put to your nose to smell and throw away,"

the repeated movements of the hand to the mouth (nose) and back to the pot being supposed to make the "bogey" think that they are not really eating but merely smelling and throwing away the food.

16. A male should not scrape the porridge off the porridge stick; this is only allowed to the woman. Should a man do so, it is supposed that when he goes hunting, he will hit anything he shoots at, only in the tail.

17. There is a saying that the men and boys may eat little pieces of porridge which fall out of the pot, while cooking, on to the supporting stones and it will give them power to escape unhurt from battle. The fragments are called *ngulupuko,* (from *ku-lupuka* "to escape").

18. Children are instructed to take their food sitting down instead of being in a hurry and standing to take it. They are told that if they do not obey, their porridge will not go into their stomachs but into their legs and swell out their knee-joints.

3: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

771 784 826 539

48. A child, when one of its milk teeth drops out, stands some five yards away facing the door of the hut and throws the tooth over the roof of the hut, saying:

"Al' kkumpulu lino lyasu alye, mbasi lyangu lyambosa 'lya!"
"Oh! crow tooth your there is, give me my of good one!"

Religion. The matter of the religious beliefs professed by natives of East Central Africa is one beset with many difficulties to the student of today. It has been the subject of many essays by workers in the missionary field, but the wide contact of the natives of Nyasaland with missionary effort during the past thirty years has done much to confuse the problem, and one feels that many missionaries in their writings rather color the picture with their own feelings. 771

I think probably the Yao with whom I am now concerned have a truer conception of their own beliefs than many of the subject tribes among whom mission teaching has more easily taken root. The religious beliefs of a people are to a large extent the reflection of the circumstances under which that people lives. The outstanding event to all natives is death. At death, something is lost to the body, without which life is impossible. This is the *msimu* which may be translated "soul" or "spirit." The *msimu* is said to leave the body of the dying man when he becomes moribund or unconscious. It appears that this same *msimu* may leave the body during unconscious states unassociated with death, as when a man faints, in epilepsy, and during sleep. 771 761 774

Apart from this evidence of the dissociation of the *msimu* from the living body, the Yao believe that a man's shadow is an objective manifestation of the soul and they will say "the shadow is the *msimu*." Fear is experienced if a man jumps on the shadow of his fellow. Light is also thrown on the constitution of the *msimu* by the belief in a certain evil-spirit which dwells in deep pools. It is called *chimalo-mesi*, which means "one who may finish (drink up) all the water." The superstition regarding this evil spirit is that it can suck the blood from your shadow as you stand at the edge of the pool, till you become so weak that you fall in and are drowned. 774 774 776

After leaving the body at death, the *msimu* goes to take up its place in the spirit-world, occupying a position corresponding to that held by the man during his life. With a truly materialistic conception, the soul is supposed to have all the attributes of the dead man, - to be wealthy in proportion as the man was so on earth, and its relative position will be identical with that which he held among the living. The tribal chief becomes a paramount chief in the spirit world, the lesser chief holds sway in his lesser capacity, etc. We shall see that in intercession, when the tribe is threatened with calamities, it is the late paramount chief who is appealed to for help, and when one feudal chief is at war with another, the chief's dead predecessor will be called upon for aid. When a village is moved, it is from the spirit of the dead headman of the village that success in the enterprise is sought. Similarly, in family trouble, some dead ancestor is entreated to set things right, while a native 775

3: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

(fig. 14), and an antelope from Mpoma's in Zomba district (fig. 11), also two birds at Pikani's which I should think represent a fowl and a crow (figs. 12, 13). It is interesting to compare these attempts which show a natural feeling for shape, with others, the work of an Angoni youth in touch with a European mission station, who depicts the missionary, his donkey, his dog, and a chair but with little or no sense of form. Note the dots above the animals' backs which represent their feet seen from the other side (Pl. XVIII, figs. 15–18).

The models of animals and other objects made in relief on the ground at *Lupanda*, and of animals in grass and bamboo at *Chiputu*, are referred to under *Initiation Ceremonies*.

Decoration is limited to the making of patterns of geometric design on many household articles. The graving of pots is mentioned under *Pottery:* gourd vessels sometimes have lines and triangles cut on the surface; ivory knife handles may have concentric circles graven on them, the same being true of ivory nose-rings and necklaces. Spear handles and walking sticks, snuff-boxes, pipes, the head-rest and the necks of musical instruments too, are commonly engraved with designs. The wooden rim of the *situnguvi* basket is always so treated. A series of these designs from baskets is reproduced (Pl. XVII). Occasionally geometric patterns are painted on the walls of huts. The best example I have seen is shown in the photograph which represents a Mohammedan mosque in South Nyasa district. This, I think, gives the key to the origin of these geometric patterns, namely, Swahili influence among the Yao (Pl. IV, fig. 1).

Personal ornamentation. The skin color admired most among the Yao is a rich brown and is likened to the color of the milliped, *lijongolo*. A very black skin is not liked and a man is said to be "as black as a crow." Very light colored skins are equally distasteful to some and considered to resemble the color of a roasted crab. The hair should be jet black. Young men anoint their heads with a decoction of *namalenga* pods in boiling oil to make the hair black and lustrous. When the hair is turning white, a substance made of the charred roots of a plant called *chisinje* is put on to make it black.

Natives recognise that some among them have red hairs on their heads or in their beards, and such a man is called *matwana*, *matwana* being the name of a caterpillar which lives on the *situwa* tree and is covered with long red hairs.

The old men used to wear wigs, *chisindi*, made of knotted string blackened and oiled to look like hair; the women wore one called *chikwa*. These were used to disguise greyness or baldness.

The women sometimes let the hair grow long and then thread beads on wisps of it. This fashion is called *chitunga*. The large red bead, *chitalala*, is now used for the purpose. This fashion was adopted by the old women and those in charge of the *Chiputu* ceremony. Strings of beads threaded on the hair falling down round the head are called *lilombola* or *malombola* (plur.). Women sometimes thread beads on the crest of hair called *nchacha*. Ordinarily the hair is periodically shaved or sometimes cut with a knife, but the process is painful and therefore unpopular.

4: Stahnus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
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M 832 this is then added to a brew of new beer and given to her husband to drink. He will then think of and love only herself. This is said to have caused the death of some husbands.

Mpasi: medicine made and drunk by a woman to make her beloved by a certain man.

M 837 844 [847] At confinement a woman has to answer whether she has ever committed adultery; if she denies an adultery she may die, if she owns up and gives the name of the man this can be remedied. Adultery on the part of the father or mother is said to be a cause of abortion.

M 837 A man going away from his village for several months and leaving his wife behind and wishing her to remain faithful puts a knife into its sheath and hangs it in the hut, telling his brother. It is then believed that should anyone commit adultery with his wife separation after the coitus is impossible till some third party comes and pulls the knife from its sheath, and in doing so becomes a witness of the adultery.

M 833 M [262] [825] [522] Eating of eggs is believed to cause impotence in children or adults. Much fat eaten is said to have the same effect. It is believed that if a hare run up against the leg of a man while going through the forest he will become impotent. It is for this reason that dung of the hare is put at the door of a man to make fun of him as impotent. This is a trick played by *Adzukulu*.

M Y 837 263 759 If a woman who has committed adultery puts salt into the food while cooking, of which her husband will partake, will thereby cause his death. At the present time among the Yao-Mañanja community a woman always calls one of the children to do it—this speaks for itself. A woman, after connection with her husband, putting salt in food, may cause illness among any children partaking of the food.

M 837 If a man accuse his wife of adultery and she denies it, he will procure medicine and place it under her pillow, then in the middle of the night she will wake her husband and tell him the name of her lover.

M 787 777 *Mpingu* = ill omen. A journey would always be stopped if on setting out one of the party die; or should they meet an ant-eater or black snake. It used to be considered a sign of bad luck if one of them knocked the toes against a stone; now if blood flows from the big toe they say it presages good luck.

Y 832 ● 826 The Yao at the age of sixteen years climbs the *mtumbi* tree, and finding a fruit which is soft makes a hole in the middle and inserts the penis. After this procedure the penis is said to enlarge as the fruit grows; when the size desired is reached the fruit is cut down.

M 827 The native says that every one has a small animal inside the ear, the sounds it makes causes the man to hear. If the animal escapes the man becomes deaf. The animal is said to be ½-inch long, and wax is said to be its excrement.

M 484 777 Where a man rests on a journey he often puts a stone in the fork of the nearest tree; on many journeys there are regular halting places, often at cross roads, and here every passer-by adds a stone for luck, making quite big heaps.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Maravi FR4

The pinna in the case of men is sometimes the seat of a small circular hole originally copied from the coast Swahili whose tribal mark it was, and who did it to prevent enlargement of the scrotum.[1] A small perforation of the lobule is commonly seen among the Chipeta-Angoni. These perforations are now, however, seen indiscriminately among various tribes in the country. The former I have seen in a Nyasa—it is also general among the troupes of professional dancing-boys, who wear a cord or a small stick through the ear, usually the right ear. The stick I have seen among Asenga, Nyasa, Machinga, and Anhewa. No definite earrings are worn. The habit of wearing three or four discs in the margin of the ear is only seen among coast women (Zanzibar) who have come to live in the country (Fig. 5).

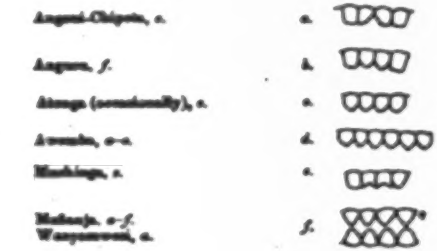

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Dental mutilation was, and is to some extent, still of tribal significance, though mostly performed for appearance (Fig. 4). Actual extraction is but very seldom seen now.

A prominent breast is admired among the natives, and to secure this a cord is tied round the chest by girls, at the upper margin of the gland, with the idea of making it project. I am inclined to think it has the opposite effect. No attempts are made to elongate the breasts, they become very pendulous without any artificial aid.

Amputation of fingers and ears, castration, etc., have in the past only been practised as punishment.

Young girls by constant pulling on the *labia minora* and enclosed clitoris try to cause elongation, as such is said to be admired.

Elsewhere I have referred to the penis of natives, which I consider to be characteristic in its hardness. This is said to be caused by the "young man" purposely injuring the organ by beating it so that it never returns to normal softness when not erected.

Cicatrization.—Cicatrization is practised by both sexes of all the tribes. In former times the designs had a certain significance, such as to indicate the tribe, to signify that the wearer had been initiated, to commemorate certain events, and so

[1] This is interesting, inasmuch as the ears are pierced in England, commonly with the belief that it prevents bad eyesight.